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March 5, 2020

**House Bill 1098**  
**Use of Public Funds – Playground and Athletic Surfaces –**  
**Authorizations, Preferences and Prohibitions**

**Appropriations Committee**

**Position: OPPOSED**

Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks OPPOSES HB1098. Anne Arundel County, like many counties in the State of Maryland, depend on state funds (including Program Open Space funds and State Bonds) as a primary funding source for land acquisition, and the construction of recreational facilities, including playgrounds, sport fields and courts, and pathways. These funds supplement county capital budget funding to meet the local demands.

The late Speaker Michael E. Busch was a champion for bringing more turf fields to Anne Arundel County. This is because recreational facilities – especially multi-purpose fields – are in high demand. Synthetic turf fields help meet that demand because they offer greater overall playing time than natural grass due to weather resistance and reliability.

Restricting the use of State Funds on new or replacement of existing playground or athletic fields with synthetic surface severely hinders the Anne Arundel County's ability to maintain and build turf fields in the future.

Historically state funds have been used for both land acquisition and construction of active recreation facilities. Limiting POS to just land acquisition is not the original intent of Program Open Space.

The State should maintain counties' existing flexibility with Program Open Space funds to support turf fields for high-demand recreational uses. Anne Arundel County communities and recreational leagues are begging for more multi-use fields to meet their needs. This legislation would make it harder for our Department to provide the recreational uses that our constituents expect and demand.

We urge an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB1098.

Jessica Leys  
Deputy Director